

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-10

SAB-01 SAM-01 OMB-01 AID-05 ACDA-05 /080 W

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R 050935Z OCT 75

FM AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3395

INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TEN/AMEMBASSY AMMAN (BY POUCH)

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

C O N F I D E N T I A L ABU DHABI 1985

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS : PFOR, TC, XF

SUBJECT : SHAIKH ZAYID COMMENTS ON MIDDLE EAST SITUATION

SUMMARY: SHAIKH ZAYID TOLD ME THAT HE DOES NOT AGREE WITH ARABS WHO ARE CRITICIZING EGYPT/ISRAEL AGREEMENT, AND THAT HIS OWN GENEROUS FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR EGYPT WILL NOT BE DIMINISHED BY SADAT'S CURRENT ISOLATION. END SUMMARY.

1. SHAIKH ZAYID ASKED ME TO PAY RAMADAN CALL ON HIM THE EVENING OF OCTOBER 2. I FOUND HIM, SURROUNDED BY HIS KHAWIYA AND HAWKS AND COLOR TV SET, LOUNGING COMFORTABLY IN LARGE TENT WHICH HE HAD PUT UP ABOUT 50 YARDS FROM THE MANHAL PALACE. HE SAID HE PREFERRED THE COOL EVENING BREEZES TO THE AIRCONDITIONING, AND BESIDES HE WAS FED UP WITH THE REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE WORK WHICH WAS CONTINUALLY GOING ON IN THE MANHAL PALACE BECAUSE OF THE ORIGINAL SHODDY CON-  
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STRUCTION. HE WAS RELAXED AND IN A GOOD MOOD.

2. WE SPENT LONG TIME TALKING ABOUT SITUATION IN MIDDLE EAST. NOTING

I HAD JUST COME BACK FROM WASHINGTON, HE ASKED ME WHAT ATMOSPHERE WAS LIKE THERE. I TOLD HIM I WAS STRUCK MOSTLY BY EXTENT TO WHICH TIME AND ENERGY OF OUR TOP OFFICIALS CONCERNED WITH FOREIGN AFFAIRS WERE TAKEN UP WITH BRIEFING CONGRESS AND BRINGING IT ALONG ON OUR FOREIGN POLICY DECISIONS. NEED FOR THIS HAD MUCH TO DO WITH AFTER-MATH OF VIET NAM AND WATERGATE WHICH HAD UNFORTUNATELY ERODED CONFIDENCE BETWEEN EXECUTIVE BRANCH AND LEGISLATURE. PROBLEM WAS COM-

POUNDED BY FACT THAT THERE SEEMED TO BE VERY LITTLE LEADERSHIP IN CON-

GRESS THESE DAYS. PRESIDENT FORD AND SECRETARY KISSINGER WERE TRYING HARD TO REBUILD THIS CONFIDENCE, AND PROGRESS WAS BEING MADE. HOWEVER, IN MEANTIME PRESIDENT AND SECRETARY HAD DIFFICULT AND TIME-CONSUMING BURDEN. IN CASE OF LATEST MIDDLE EAST AGREEMENT, HOWEVER, I EXPRESSED OPINION THAT CONGRESSIONAL HEARINGS WOULD CONSTITUTE DELAY

BUT NOT IMPEDIMENT TO APPROVAL OF U.S. ROLE IN AGREEMENT AND SPECIFICALLY OF SENDING U.S. TECHNICIANS TO HELP MAN EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS.

3. SHAIKH ZAYID SAID AFTER AGREEMENT WAS SIGNED THERE HAD BEEN USUAL RACE TO HIS DOORSTEP ON PART OF EMISSARIES OF EGYPT, SYRIA, AND PLO TO EXPLAIN THEIR POINTS OF VIEW. HE HAD LISTENED CAREFULLY TO ALL OF THEM, AND HAD OFFERED SOME ADVICE. ASHRAF MARAWAN FROM CAIRO HAD BEEN FIRST TO ARRIVE, TAKING CONSIDERABLE PAINS TO JUSTIFY AGREEMENT, AND EXPRESSING OBVIOUS CONCERN WITH VOICES OF CRITICISM FROM OTHER ARABS. ZAYID SAID HE HAD ADVISED HIM NOT TO PAY TOO MUCH ATTENTION TO CRITICISM. IF PRESIDENT SADAT WERE CONVNCED THIS WAS RIGHT WAY TO PROCEED, AND WAS CONVINCED IN HIS OWN MIND THAT HE HAD NOT ABANDONED OTHER ARABS, THEN HE WOULD CONTINUE TO HAVE UAE'S FULL SUPPORT, AND FURTHERMORE IN SHAIKH ZAYID'S

OPINION DESERVED BENEFIT OF DOUBT FROM ALL OTHER ARABS AS WELL. KHADDAM HAD ARRIVED NEXT. HE HAD BEEN EXTREMELY CRITICAL OF AGREEMENT. ZAYID SAID HE HAD TOLD HIM FRANKLY THAT HE DID NOT SEE THAT DAM-

ASCUS HAD VALID GROUNDS FOR CRITICIZING SADAT. HE TOLD KHADDAM THAT INSTEAD OF CRITICIZING CAIRO, DAMASCUS OUGHT TO ACCEPT AGREEMENT.  
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MENT AND TRY TO BUILD ON IT. IT SHOULD BE APPLYING ITS ENERGIES TO REACH FURTHER AGREEMENT WHICH WOULD ENCOMPASS ISSUES ABOUT WHICH HE WAS SO CONCERNED. ACCORDING TO ZAYID HE TOLD KHADDAM THAT SADAT WAS GOOD FOR EGYPT AND THAT CONTINUED SUPPORT OF HIM WAS NECESSARY.

4. ZAYID SAID HE HAD GIVEN MUCH SAME MESSAGE TO ARAFAT, IN RESPONSE TO ARAFAT'S RESERVATIONS ABOUT AGREEMENT, WHICH ACCORDING TO ZAYID HAD BEEN EXPRESSED MORE CAUTIOUSLY THAN WAS THE CASE WITH

THE SYRIANS. (ZAYID COMMENTED, "ARAFAT IS REALLY VERY MODERATE MAN AND VERY SMOOTH DIPLOMAT".) ZAYID TOLD ARAFAT THAT HE THOUGHT THAT IF THERE WERE SPLIT BETWEEN CAIRO AND PALESTINIANS, IT WOULD BE PALESTINIANS WHO WERE THE LOSERS, NOT EGYPT. TO BOTH KHADDAM AND ARAFAT ZAYID HAD STRESSED FACT THAT EGYPT IS KEYSTONE OF ARAB EFFORT AND NO ARAB STRATEGY WAS POSSIBLE WITHOUT EGYPT.

5. I TOLD ZAYID THAT WASHINGTON WOULD BE GLAD TO HEAR OF HIS STRONG SUPPORT FOR SADAT AT THIS TIME. OUR PERCEPTION OF KEY ROLE PLAYED BY EGYPT AND SADAT IN PEACE PROCESS WAS SIMILAR TO HIS OWN. WE BELIEVED SADAT HAD BEEN IMAGINATIVE, FARSIGHTED, AND COURAGEOUS IN HIS APPROACH TO MIDDLE EAST PROBLEM. I SAID WHAT SADAT REALIZED BUT HIS CRITICS DID NOT WAS THAT PATIENCE AND TENACITY OF PURPOSE HAD TO BE BROUGHT TO BEAR IN ANY POLITICAL STRATEGY. I ASKED RHETORICALLY WHETHER SHAIKH ZAYID THOUGHT HE COULD EVER HAVE REACHED AGREEMENT ON HIS DISPUTE WITH SAUDI ARABIA IF HE HAD NOT BROUGHT GREAT

DEAL OF PATIENCE TO BEAR ON PROBLEM. HE HEARTILY AGREED. HE SAID WHAT ALL ARABS SHOULD REMIND THEMSELVES DAILY OF WAS HOW MUCH BETTER SADAT WAS THAN NASSER, AND WHAT A MESS IT WOULD BE FOR ALL OFK THEM

IF SADAT FAILED AND WAS OVERTHROWN. ZAYID SAID HIS SUPPORT FOR SADAT,

WHICH HAD BEEN GENEROUS, WOULD NOT BE DIMINISHED. I SAID I WAS GRATIFIED TO HEAR IT. ZAYID COMMENTED THAT EGYPT HAD MANY ECONOMIC PROBLEMS AT PRESENT BUT HE THOUGHT THAT GIVEN TWO OR THREE YEARS OF PEACE AND GENEROUS SUPPORT FROM THE OUTSIDE, EGYPT COULD BEGIN TO SOLVE ITS PROBLEMS. I MENTIONED TO SHAIKH ZAYID THAT THE ADMINISTRATION WAS PLANNING TO ASK CONGRESS FOR A FIGURE OF BETWEEN 600 AND 700 MILLION DOLLARS FOR ASSISTANCE TO EGYPT THIS YEAR. I NOTED THAT THIS KIND OF ASSISTANCE WAS INCONCEIVABLE A FEW YEARS AGO AND IT WAS A SYMBOL OF THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE ATMOSPHERE OF US-EGYPTIAN RELATIONS HAD CHANGED.

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6. ZAYID ASKED ME WHAT WASHINGTON'S THOUGHTS WERE ON NEXT STEPS. I SAID IT WAS UP TO THE PARTIES TO DECIDE AT THIS POINT HOW PRECISELY TO PROCEED. OUR COMMITMENT TO HELP PARTIES REACH FURTHER STAGES OF AGREEMENT WAS UNDIMINISHED, BUT PRECISE PATH NOW TO BE TAKEN UP WOULD DEPEND ON WISHES OF PARTIES. SECRETARY KISSINGER HAD SUGGESTED VARIOUS ALTERNATIVES IN HIS SPEECH TO THE U.N.: BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS

BETWEEN SYRIA AND ISRAEL; RECONVENING OF THE GENEVA CONFERENCE; AN INFORMAL MULTILATERAL MEETING AMONG THE PARTIES TO EXPLORE POSSIBLE BROAD APPRAOCH TO THE PEACE PROBLEM. ZAYID LISTENED CAREFULLY BUT DID NOT MAKE ANY COMMENTS ON THESE ALTERNATIVES. WE THEN TURNED TO OTHER SUBJECTS WHICH ARE REPORTED SEPTEL.

7. COMMENT: EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR HERE IS ALSO PLEASED WITH ZAYID'S

PERSONAL SUPPORT FOR EGYPTIAN POSITION. HE CLAIMS TO HAVE CORROBORAT-

ING EVIDENCE THAT ZAYID'S MEETING WITH KHADDAM HAD ITS PRICKLY MOMENTS--AT ONE POINT ZAYID REPORTEDLY SHARPLY ASKED KHADDAM WHETHER, HAD THIS BEEN A SYRIAN AGREEMENT, DAMASCUS WOULD BE TOLERATING CRITICISM FROM CAIRO, AND KHADDAM DID NOT ANSWER. BUT IN SPITE OF WHATEVER REPROVING WORDS ZAYID MAY HAVE DELIVERED TO SYRIANS AND PALESTINIANS FOR SNIPING AT AGREEMENT, I DOUBT THAT HIS GENEROUS SUPPORT FOR THESE TWO PARTIES WILL BE MATERIALLY DIMINISHED. AS EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR SAYS, "ZAYID WILL CONTINUE TO GRASP THE STICK IN THE MIDDLE ON THIS ONE." HE FEELS GREATER BOND WITH PALESTINIANS AND SYRIANS AS PEOPLE THAN EGYPTIANS. ON OTHER HAND, HE HAS GENUINE ADMIRATION FOR SADAT, BOTH OF HIS REALISTIC APPROACH TO CONFLICT WITH ISRAEL AS WELL AS FOR WHAT HE IS TRYING TO DO IN EGYPT. INTERESTING TO NOTE THAT, ALTHOUGH HE HAD PLENTY OF OPPORTUNITY TO DO SO, ZAYID DID NOT RAISE ANY OF THE DIFFICULT QUESTIONS ABOUT AGREE-

MENT HE MIGHT HAVE WITH ME, E.G. FINANCIAL AND ARMS SUPPORT FOR ISRAEL, HOW PALESTINIANS WOULD BE BROUGHT INTO NEXT PHASE, ETC., A SIGN, I BELIEVE, OF THE RESPECT HE HOLDS FOR U.S. ACHIEVEMENT IN THIS LATEST ROUND.

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** PERSONAL OPINION, POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, POLITICAL SITUATION  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 05 OCT 1975  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** CunninFX  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
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**Disposition Remarks:**  
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**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D750345-0982  
**From:** ABU DHABI  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1975/newtext/t19751081/aaaacuvp.tel  
**Line Count:** 191  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION NEA  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 4  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** CunninFX  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 20 JUN 2003  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <20 JUN 2003 by izenbei0>; APPROVED <04 NOV 2003 by CunninFX>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
06 JUL 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** : SHAIKH ZAYID COMMENTS ON MIDDLE EAST SITUATION SUMMARY: SHAIKH ZAYID TOLD ME THAT HE DOES NOT AGREE WITH  
**TAGS:** PFOR, TC, XF, (NUHAYAN, ZAYID IBN SULTAN AL)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006